

this Chamber work hard to protect and strengthen every day.

Again, I thank the Chair and the leader. I particularly thank Chief Rabbi Sacks for honoring us with his presence and his words today.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

#### SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following leader remarks, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the second half.

Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1769, the Rebuild America Jobs Act.

I filed a cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 1769 last night. If no agreement is reached, we will vote on this tomorrow morning. I am working with the Republican leader to come up with an expeditious way of expressing the will of the Senate in the next 24 hours.

Again, tomorrow the Senate will vote on the Rebuild American Jobs Act. It is a plan to put hundreds of thousands of Americans back to work, constructing thousands of miles of roads, bridges, runways, and train tracks.

The plan is paid for with a small tax—less than a penny—on every dollar a person earns in excess of \$1 million every year. The legislation asks millionaires and billionaires to contribute a little more than they do today, knowing there is a pricetag associated with getting our economy back on track.

My Republican colleagues say they oppose this plan to hire hundreds of thousands of construction workers and rebuild our Nation's collapsing infrastructure because they believe the wealthiest Americans cannot afford to pay a few pennies more.

Even the majority of people who would pay this tax say that isn't true. They support our plan. This tiny fraction of American taxpayers who would pay a tiny fraction more each year are among the 1 percent of Americans who have done better and better with each passing decade.

Between 1979 and 2007, the annual aftertax income at the top 1 percent of American wage earners has increased by 275 percent. That same 1 percent now makes more than the other 99 percent of Americans combined. These are the latest figures. It is difficult to compile these numbers. Think about what has happened in the last 4 years. They have even gotten richer and richer. I repeat, that 1 percent now makes more than the other 99 percent of Americans combined. And not all of that 1 percent of wealthy Americans would even qualify to pay this tax to fund billions of dollars in road construction and create hundreds of thousands of jobs. Only those whose income is more than \$1 million. Some billionaires and millionaires would not qualify because their

income in a given year is less than \$1 million. They may have a lot of property wealth and things of that nature.

Tomorrow, my Republican colleagues face a choice, which is not whether to invest in roads or bridges or whether the richest of the rich can spare a few pennies for the sake of our economy; the choice is about priorities. Who will Republicans put first, the millions of ordinary Americans who are struggling to find work and put food on the table or the millionaires and billionaires, whose biggest problem is that they may have to pay an additional \$7,000 on the second million they make each year?

We ought to be able to agree that making enough money to pay even a dollar more under our plan is a wonderful problem to have. But so far, Republicans have been pretty clear what their priorities are. They unanimously voted against the American Jobs Act. That legislation would have put more than 2 million people back to work and cut taxes for middle-class families and small businesses.

Then they unanimously voted against the Democrats' plan to put 400,000 teachers and tens of thousands of police officers and firefighters back to work. Republicans have cost this country millions of jobs in the last few weeks alone. They will have another opportunity tomorrow to show America whose side they are on—billionaires and millionaires or the middle class.

Seventy-two percent of Americans, including 54 percent of Republicans, want us to pass this plan. Seventy-six percent of them, including 56 percent of Republicans, want us to pay for it by asking the Nation's wealthiest citizens to contribute their fair share.

Americans—Democrats, Republicans, and Independents—know the only way out of the worst recession since the Great Depression is to invest in what this country needs—its workers to be employed. They believe it is fair to ask those who have profited most from this country's success to help shoulder that burden.

Republicans have obstructed and opposed every Democratic effort to create jobs this year. Why would they do that? Fear. Because those job creation efforts would cost millionaires and billionaires even a dollar more. Who do they fear? The truth is they are terrified to violate the infamous Grover Norquist tax pledge, even though they know Norquist is wrong—or if they don't know, they should know. They are in thrall, my Republican colleagues, and in submission to a man whose singular focus is keeping taxes low for the very wealthy, no matter what the effect is on this Nation. They fear his political retribution.

I hope my Republican colleagues will heed this message sent yesterday by former Republican Senator Alan Simpson, a conservative bona fide, regarding Grover Norquist's pledge. He said the only power Norquist wields is the power you give him. Senator Simpson said:

He can't murder you; he can't burn your house. The only thing he can do is defeat you for reelection, and if that means more to you than your country, you really shouldn't be in Congress.

That is what Simpson said. I believe most Senators—and certainly most Americans—know that legislating isn't simple. It is not as simple as a mindless pledge. Those Senators must have the courage to act on their convictions.

As British historian Thomas Fuller once said, "Better break your word than do worse in keeping it."

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

#### A DIFFERENT APPROACH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, there is no denying the fact that the policies of the past 2½ years have made a bad situation worse. For 2½ years, Democrats completely dominated this town. They got everything they wanted. And what happened? Unemployment has hovered at around 9 percent for 32 months. The so-called misery index is worse than it has been in more than 25 years. Consumer confidence is at levels last seen during the height of the financial crisis. But if one number really stands out, it is this: 1.5 million. That is the number of fewer jobs we now have in this country since the day President Obama signed his signature "jobs bill" into law.

These are just some of the numbers that all of us, Republicans and Democrats, read about every single day. But it is not the numbers that compel us to action; it is the stories that lie behind them. It is the millions of men and women who have seen their dreams shattered, their lives upended, and their potential unfulfilled.

What Republicans have been saying is that if we truly want to help improve the situation we are in, if we want to turn this ship around, then we need to learn from our mistakes and take a totally different approach. We know what policies haven't worked. We have tried that. What sense does it make to try those same policies again and again? That is why Republicans in the House and the Senate have been taking a different approach.

Democrats may control the White House, and they may control the Senate, but for the past 10 months Republicans in the other half of Congress have done their best to correct the mistakes and excesses of the previous 2½ years and set us on a different course.

They have done something else that Democrats have not done over the past few years: Week after week, the Republican majority in the House of Representatives has been passing bills that actually have a chance—actually have a chance—of gaining bipartisan support and becoming law. They are actually trying to do something.